



November 28, 2022

The Honorable Stephen A. Huffman, Chair  
The Honorable Nickie J. Antonio, Ranking Member  
Ohio Senate Health Committee

**RE: Support of HB 135**

Dear Chairman Huffman, Ranking Member Antonio and Members of the Senate Health Committee,

On behalf of Allergy & Asthma Network, a leading national nonprofit dedicated to protecting and improving the health of people with allergies, asthma and related conditions, we join the Coalition to Support Ohio HB 135 and ask for your support for this legislation to help protect Ohio patients.

One of our key advocacy issues is to improve patient access to medical care and treatment. That is the key purpose of HB 135. When payers utilize copay accumulator adjustment policies, we realize:

- Studies indicate that the result of copay accumulator programs is poorer health outcomes and higher costs to the overall healthcare system.
- The extra costs prevent patients from using specialty therapies or following the doctor recommended dosages.
- More than one in four specialty brand prescriptions are no longer filled when patients must pay toward their deductibles for them.

Simultaneously, according to the [Ohio Department of Health Asthma Division](#):

- Approximately 1.25 million Ohio adults have been told at some time in their life that they had asthma, of which approximately 895,000 reported that they currently had asthma.
- Approximately 294,000 children in Ohio have been told at some time in their life that they had asthma.
- Four in ten (40.3 percent) of adults who reported current asthma and were currently employed missed work due to asthma in the past year.
- Adults living below poverty level have significantly higher asthma rates than those with incomes \$25,000 and above, with over one in five reporting current asthma (20.7 percent)
- In 2016, there were nearly 7,000 inpatient hospital visits and close to 50,000 emergency department visits for a primary diagnosis of asthma.
- Asthma emergency department visit rates have been consistently highest in children under the age of five- over 25 percent higher than other age groups. Among children under 5 years of age, the boys' rate exceeded the girls' rate by close to 75 percent.

- Since 1990, an average of 135 Ohio citizens per year die from asthma. Adult women and black residents are significantly more likely to die of asthma. Almost all asthma deaths are preventable with appropriate medical care.

Thank you for your consideration and we hope to see HB 135 become law to help all Ohioans have greater access to affordable prescriptions medications and breathe better. Please contact me at 1-800-878-4403 if you have any questions and to learn more about Allergy & Asthma Network, visit [www.AllergyAsthmaNetwork.org](http://www.AllergyAsthmaNetwork.org).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Charmayne Anderson". The signature is written in black ink and extends across the width of the page.

Charmayne Anderson  
Director of Advocacy

cc: Lynda Mitchell, Chief Operating Officer